

My name is June Sachs and I am a life long resident of New Haven. Unfortunately, the time has come for me to decide whether or not I am able to continue to live in New Haven. The taxes in New Haven continue to rise and are now at the point where it is a hardship for many New Haven property owners.

The Mayor of New Haven has submitted her proposed budget, and she is asking for an increase in the mill rate. I must admit, that there are line items in the budget with which I do not agree and believe there are many areas where costs should be cut. However, one of the main reasons there is a gap in the budget is because the PILOT program has not been funded for years. I stand before you to ask you to support fully funding the PILOT program.

New Haven is a unique city in that about half of the properties are exempt from paying taxes. That means the tax burden falls upon a few to keep the city running. The PILOT program was started to assist cities and taxpayers in bridging that gap. Because the State has been, for many years, unable or unwilling to fulfill their promise to pay 77 cents of every non-profit dollar, we the taxpayers have been picking up the difference. We can no longer carry this burden. We can no longer subsidize people, both rich and poor, who use our hospitals, attend schools, and use the services New Haven offers. We, the taxpayers, can no longer subsidize the non-profits who benefit and use the services of our police, fire, and public works departments to name a few.

The State entered into an agreement with the City of New Haven and it is time the State is held accountable. If I, as a private citizen, entered into an agreement, I would be held responsible for fulfilling that agreement. The same must hold true for the State.

Without this money, the environment in New Haven has become unstable. It is an environment in which businesses will not feel secure. Without new business there is no economic development and without that there are no new jobs. People are already starting to leave. I pray I will not be one of those people but I am no longer hopeful.

We, the people of New Haven, are drowning. You are the people who are supposed to hear our cries for help. Please do not turn a deaf ear to our cries. I stand before you and ask you to hear our pleas. I stand before you and ask you to stand up and do what is right and responsible. I stand before you to ask you to have the courage to hold the State accountable.

Please fully fund the PILOT program and help our city become the city it is meant to be.